

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LILONG 00146 261054Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DOTE-00 EUR-12 L-03

NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 /092 W

-----261102Z 049673 /16

R 260541Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 594

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LILONGWE 0146

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, MI

SUBJECT: STATE/AID SOUTHERN AFRICAN WORKING GROUP SOUTHERN
AFRICA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

REF: A. STATE 271353 (76)

B. STATE 313572 (76)

1. EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT EXPERTISE TO PASS
COMPREHENSIVE JUDGMENT ON STUDY WHICH APPEARS ON SURFACE
TO BE USEFUL COMPENDIUM OF FACTS AND INDICATOR OF WHERE TO
CONCENTRATE FUNDS FOR FURTHER ANALYSES.

2. AS CONCERNS MALAWI, EMBASSY AGREES WITH PARA 2, REFTEL A
ALTHOUGH AS STUDY POINTS OUT REHABILITATION IS ALWAYS
IMPORTANT IN THIS AREA GIVEN GENERALLY LOW LEVELS OF
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MAINTENANCE, A SITUATION LIKELY TO BECOME MORE CRITICAL WITH
TRANSFER TO MAJORITY GOVERNMENT IN RHODESIA.

3. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH TWO PROJECTS, NAMELY
USAID-FINANCED LILONGWE-MCHINJI-ZAMBIA BORDER ROAD AND PLANS
TO EXTEND RAILROAD FROM LILONGWE TO ZAMBIA BORDER HAVE BEEN
JUSTIFIED ECONOMICALLY, THERE ARE IMPORTANT POLITICAL

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MALAWI, NAMELY CLOSER TIES TO NEIGHBORING ZAMBIA.

4. PAGE III-17 MENTIONS SOUTH AFRICAN ASSISTANCE FOR EXTENSION OF RAILROAD FROM SALIMA TO ZAMBIA. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THE ENTIRE STRETCH OF RAILROAD IS TO BE FINANCED BY CANADIAN GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS EARLIER TALK OF SOUTH AFRICA FINANCING, THE MALAWIANS FOUND THE CANADIAN OFFERS MORE ATTRACTIVE. HOWEVER THERE IS SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE SALIMA PLANT WHICH PRODUCES CONCRETE RAILROAD TIES.

5. LOCAL TRANSPORT SOURCES INDICATE THAT RAIL LINK TO NACALA IS IN EXCELLENT CONDITION WHICH CONFLICTS WITH INFORMATION ON PAGE III-19.

6. EMBASSY AGREES WITH ASSESSMENT ON PAGE III-25 THAT MALAWI HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY HURT BY MOZAMBIQUE CLOSURE OF RHODESIAN BORDER. CLOSURE NOT ONLY CUT OFF DIRECT MALAWIAN-RHODESIAN TRADE BUT FORCED ROAD AND RAIL TRAFFIC WITH SOUTH AFRICA (WHICH NECESSARILY PASSED THROUGH RHODESIA) TO BE REROUTED BY SEA OR AIR. INCREASED TRANSPORTATION COSTS HAVE ADDED TO MALAWI'S IMPORT PROBLEMS, DOMESTIC INFLATION AND HAVE STRAINED OFFICIAL FOREIGN RESERVES.
STEVENSON

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